



# Arizona Department of Agriculture

## Bird Disease Surveillance Activities Update: We Need You!



Dear Poultry Owner,

Avian Influenza and Exotic Newcastle have been receiving plenty of attention in the media recently and we want to make sure you are doing everything possible to protect your flock.

To ensure the safety of your flock, take a moment to review the attached ADA and USDA materials on Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) and Avian Influenza (AI) and as well as recommended flock biosecurity practices.



Given the current nationwide concern about avian influenza spreading throughout Asia and Europe and its potential to spread world-wide, the Arizona Department of Agriculture is expanding its poultry surveillance and preparedness activities.

Avian influenza not only threatens poultry health but, as you probably know, some variants of this disease found in Asia and Eastern Europe may now threaten human health.



It is extremely important that you report birds of all species showing any suspicious signs of disease, as both highly pathogenic Avian influenza (HPAI) and Exotic Newcastle Disease are highly contagious, devastating diseases among many types of poultry and may spread rapidly.

Call the **ADA Livestock and Poultry Disease Hotline (888-742-5334)** for assistance if you have birds showing suspicious signs of disease.

Subject to the availability of funding, the ADA will pay the costs of disease diagnosis for cooperating poultry owners who report sick birds showing signs suggestive of HPAI or END infection.



Thank you for your interest and cooperation.

Arizona Department of Agriculture  
Animal Services Division  
Office of the State Veterinarian

## The Latest News!

With the current nationwide concern about avian influenza spreading throughout Asia and Eastern Europe and its potential to spread world-wide, the Arizona Department of Agriculture (ADA) is methodically expanding its surveillance and preparedness activities. Original surveillance efforts focused primarily on Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), which was eliminated in poultry flocks in several western states including Arizona in 2002 and 2003, have now been expanded to include Avian Influenza (AI).

Certain types of Avian influenza not only threaten poultry health but, unlike END, may also be emerging human health threats. In Asia some variants of AI, known as highly pathogenic avian influenza (or HPAI) of the H5N1 type, have infected people but so far seem to have been acquired mainly by direct contact with infected poultry. Viral experts fear that this Asian type may eventually mutate sufficiently enabling it to spread from person-to-person. Whether or not this occurs, this and other HPAI forms of Avian Influenza remain major threats to U.S. agriculture because of their highly contagious nature and ability to cause widespread death loss among domestic poultry. In addition, low-pathogenic forms of Avian Influenza, known as LPAI, are of concern because they are thought to be capable of occasionally mutating to HPAI forms; hence all forms of avian influenza among domestic poultry are of interest to regulatory authorities. LPAI has occurred among U.S. poultry but causes little or no visible disease and does not cause disease in people. The Asian HPAI H5N1 type so far has not been detected in North America.

Current surveillance and prevention activities are focused on, but are not limited to, domestic poultry such as chickens and turkeys. This is because devastating outbreaks caused by AI and END have occurred among these species which are of greatest economic significance in the American poultry industry.

Current strategy relies on: 1. Early detection and quarantine of infected flocks, 2. Disease prevention through flock biosecurity, and, 3. Providing poultry disease information and diagnostic resources to poultry owners.

## How To Get Involved!

**Early Detection:** In cooperation with USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) personnel, ADA veterinarians routinely respond to calls concerning sick poultry and are equipped with swabbing kits to test the birds for AI and END. Bird owners, including those owning poultry other than chickens and turkeys, are encouraged to call the **ADA Livestock and Poultry Hotline number (888-742-5334)** if they have dying birds or birds showing signs of disease affecting the respiratory, nervous or digestive systems. In many cases, subject to the availability of funding, the ADA may be able to help owners by paying the costs associated with testing for poultry diseases.

**Disease prevention:** Poultry owners can prevent disease problems by utilizing a series of common-sense, proven steps referred to as biosecurity. These are:

1. Exclude wild bird species from domestic poultry's water and feed by constructing enclosures using square-mesh welded aviary wire.
2. Prohibit visitation of your premises by persons owning poultry or who have visited other poultry farms recently.
3. Avoid or minimize visiting other poultry farms. If you do, change your clothing and footwear and wash your hands thoroughly before working with your flock.
4. Employees and bird owners should routinely wear protective outer garments (i.e. coveralls) and footwear. Coveralls should be laundered regularly. Boots should be routinely washed, then dipped in disinfectant footbaths both when entering or leaving poultry premises.
5. Employees and poultry owners should routinely wash their hands with soap and water when entering and leaving poultry premises.
6. Do not loan or borrow poultry equipment.
7. Sanitize cages regularly.
8. Thoroughly clean and disinfect equipment and vehicles (including tires and undercarriage) entering and leaving poultry premises.
9. Do not bring birds from live bird markets back to the farm.
10. Quarantine new birds for 30 days. Watch for signs of disease.
11. Handle sick birds or quarantined birds last. Use personal disinfection procedures afterwards: for example: hand washing, changing and laundering protective outer clothing, using a footbath.
12. When buying new birds from out-of-state, be sure to have the seller provide a Health Certificate from a veterinarian. This should accompany the birds while in transit and is required by the ADA for entry of poultry into Arizona.
13. Keep a file of all records pertaining to the purchase of out-of-state poultry.

**For More Information!**

**Poultry disease information resources:** Additional avian disease and biosecurity information is available at:

- [www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/birdbiosecurity/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/birdbiosecurity/) and [www.usda.gov/birdflu](http://www.usda.gov/birdflu)
- ADA Livestock and Poultry Disease Hotline (888-742-5334)

